2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

and at Khimarela one may hear, 'You are drunk, you of Maleakhotho, you who are habitual smokers of hemp.' Not only have sub-groups and even lineages distinctive variations upon perhaps a common praise of the group, but there are different praises appropriate to different occasions.

Owing to patrilocal marriage, the patrilineal kin tend to form the core of a district. These cores were perhaps more distinct in the distant past, for it is quite clear that, for instance, the districts of the Mudiga lay towards the east, while those of the Mahasha clustered together in the north-west. But members of the Mudiga and Mahasha were always scattered throughout the tribe and never co-operated as groups in any political situation. We must not think of co-operating patrilineal groups, for 'A man has influence and fortune where he has relatives-in-law'. The core of the district may be the brothers, father's brothers, and their sons in the district, but generally the mother is a link with one outside district and sisters and daughters marry into others. There is seldom a numerical preponderance of the lineage of the district head in the territorial unit, their number and solidarity depending upon a large number of factors: length of residence or of headship, the homogeneity of diversity, size, dispersion or concentration of the group that immigrated and was given a district, agreement within the group, and so on.

We may take Matsui as an example. The head, a Crocodile, and his male forebears have ruled the area for over a century. Matsui is at one point immediately adjacent to the capital, but it is also near a whole chain of old Crocodile settlements, which 150 years ago extended from Mamaila in the north to Ụudupi in the south. The district is largely a valley area and thus avoided by the Lovedu royal group, but extensively occupied by the Shangana-Ṭonga since about 1840. The population is 22 per cent. Crocodile and 14 per cent. Lovedu; 47 per cent. of the people belong to foreign groups or sub-groups, with whom intermarriage is not wholly disapproved, and 17 per cent. Shangana-Ṭonga. The Crocodiles are patrilineal kin and the Lovedu are relatives-in-law of the head, but the links with the Shangana-Ṭonga are those of neighbourliness, some friendship, and some economic interdependence. Of the intermarriageable foreigners, 20 per cent. are related in some way to the head, being mostly relatives of the line of 'messengers' (*diḍuna*) of the district head. It is generally felt that the messengers should not be patrilineally related to the head because of possible conflicts, but their alliance with the head is usually a close and long-established one. In the case of Matsui, the links are not only through the capital where the group of the 'messenger' used to be officials, but also through the district head's brother, who is the *muḍuhulu* (cattle-linked sister's son) of the 'messenger'. In other districts, of course, the dispositions are different: on the hills, for instance, there are no Shangana-Ṭonga and few of the more or less outcast *vaṛka*. The diversity of the groups is very great, as we have indicated elsewhere, but the manner in which they have been interwoven into the royal group, chiefly through the districts, is even more impressive.

The patrilineal core of the district is no more important than the link through the bilateral kin, especially through mothers and sisters and daughters and the cattle-chains forged by them with other areas and with

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

the capital. These links emphasize the part played by women in the political system. The intermediaries or registrars at the capital, through whom political and legal matters are taken from the district to the queen, are called, not fathers or councillors, as is very usual in other tribes, but 'mothers' of the district heads (*mma vɔna*), a very appropriate name in the light of the fact that one usually approaches the paternal authority through one's mother. 'Mothers' of districts may be women as well as men, and quite often a male 'mother' is succeeded by his widow. The position opens large avenues of political opportunity for women. Again, at present 14 per cent. of the acting district heads are women, some holding in their own right, some on behalf of a male heir, who perhaps, as in the case of Mukupi, will never have much influence during the lifetime of the deputy. If we reckon cases in which a son is ruling in consultation with his mother, the percentage is much higher.

Let us take a few examples. Mukoko, the jester (*khidada*) at the capital, is nominally head at Ravothata; but until her death it was his mother, daughter of the brother of Mujaji II and a wife of the queen, who was in charge, and it is now his wife, also an ex-wife of the queen, who has remained behind and rules, though Mukoko has appointed a deputy. At Madumani, the heir has quarrelled with and was expelled by the sister of his deceased father; she installed another son, Khobi, as nominal head; and when Khobi died, his sister took over control, feathering the nest of her son, against whom the chances of the rightful heir seem at present to be small. At Muthomeni the mother's influential relatives secured the succession of Mudzwalo against that of his younger brother, the legal heir. Matsɛre's sister's daughter is head at Khiobeni and her husband does the court work. Khimarɛla, an old Mudiga district, was consistently given to wives of the queen; and in its recent history, Matnagu, a wife of the queen who married a Mudiga, was head until her son, Thagu, took over. The mother of a district head at Khithunja rules because the son has paralysis. At Lerejini, Bogi, who is now head, entrusted the district to his elder sister, who, in order to rule, as she did until her death, left her husband, who lived in another area. Rapada at Mashakha had only one daughter in the great house and she was a wife of the queen when he died; his wife is now head and, if the ideal pattern is followed, she will be succeeded by the heir of the daughter-in-law, supposititious wife of her son, who comes to cook for her; but this daughter-in-law, as experience shows, is likely to overshadow her son, the true heir. Magovo, sister of Mugɔdɔ, the chief, was the first ruler at Mudzinoni; as she had no issue, her sister succeeded her, the next head was daughter of the sister (because the son expelled the true heir and then died prematurely), and this daughter was followed by her own choice, the son of her brother.

Cases of this nature, where a woman plays the decisive role, may be multiplied. They may give the impression that there are no strongly institutionalized rules of succession; yet these rules exist. They are patrilineally patterned, but they recognize the claims of the sister's son (*muɖuhulu*). The weight of the social structure, in all complicated cases, balances unevenly between the cattle-descent and the cattle-linked

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

houses—that is, between the heir raised in the chief house of the head and the head's cattle-linked sister. The daughter of the cattle-linked brother comes as daughter-in-law to the mistress of the chief house, her cattle-linked aunt, to bear the heir, whether that house has a son or not; and legal precedences support this arrangement and succession. This emphasizes the power of the mother and her lineage. But the position of the cattle-linked sister is also strong, as we have indicated elsewhere, and in cases of succession to the headship of a district is further strengthened if she has been a wife of the queen. Conflicts do often arise and it is not strange that the queen usually leaves them to settle themselves. It is seldom that she interferes or interposes her authority, though she does so when the balance of convenience or interest strongly inclines one way. Tenure of headship is tolerably secure. The queen would only exceptionally and for very good reasons favour the displacement of a district head of one of the old groups; and in that case the district itself must strongly desire it while, not a stranger, but the nearest acceptable relative of the lineage will be substituted. If, however, the links with the royal family are not close, tenure by the lineage is less secure and it occasions no surprise that a man, coming to the queen with a few pounds, may be given a district where there has been trouble. We have seen a few such cases and it seemed incomprehensible to those with whom we discussed them that we suspected bribery and corruption.

The district is singularly autonomous in its political arrangements. Land is allotted by the district head not, as in many neighbouring tribes, by the chief. The district head, if he wishes, gives land to people living in other districts; at Mawa, for instance, non-residents hold over 300 fields. The district head reports the settlement of a stranger from another tribe by taking £1 to the queen, but it is to him as district owner that landholders annually bring beer. A non-resident also nowadays cultivates the district head with beer, clothes, and even money before asking for land. The land given to a non-resident is not very securely held; the tenure is so imperfectly institutionalized that practice varies from one district to another and definite rights and obligations cannot easily be deduced; on the whole, it is not unlike lending, though the culture does not recognize lending of land for a consideration. A non-resident holding land in a district, unlike a resident, cannot, generally speaking, interchange it with or lend it to others without the consent of the head; but at the capital he can, even without reporting to the queen; and there also a resident may break new land without any one's permission.

Land tenure is too complicated for treatment here, but we may note that where a district head takes back the land of a resident, the queen's court may, but does not usually, interfere in the interests not so much of security of land tenure as of peace. If a resident quarrels with the district head, he cannot beg pardon with beer, highly though that method of reconciliation is appraised, because he would be 'humbling himself with the mealies of the land' or, as it is sometimes phrased, 'paying a fine with the calf of the cattle of the district head'. A resident migrating from the district should bid its head farewell with 'the beer of greeting'; application

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

fine or making the restitution. The great feature of the *khɔrɔ* is its publicity. It constitutes a large part of the public life of the men and, while it lives as an institution, it will powerfully counteract the sense of frustration resulting from the intervention of the white man.

The *khɔrɔ* is the final safeguard of the *munywalo* system and, through that system, of the intricate social structure. It also deals with witchcraft, theft, assault, adultery, and other disputes; but its province in witchcraft and sorcery is limited and has only recently developed, theft and adultery do not lend themselves to its genius, and other cases are primarily to be settled by *hu khumɛlwa*. Of all disputes coming before the *khɔrɔ*, 76 per cent. are *munywalo* cases, but if we consider only the disputes that are really submitted to trial and not merely for confirmation or registration of a decision otherwise reached, the percentage rises to 88. Yet the chief subject of litigation is *munywalo* only if we ignore completely the conflicts that are settled by *hu khumɛlwa* or in the family. In our opinion, though by the nature of the case the evidence can never be complete, these latter cases outnumber *khɔrɔ* cases to the same extent as *munywalo* cases outnumber all other cases of the *khɔrɔ*.

Of the many implications of these facts, we shall refer merely to two First of all, contrary to what is often stated concerning the Bantu, it is not that most conflicts in the society arise from *munywalo*, but that, of the disputes having, as we phrase it, legal consequences, none are more in evidence than *munywalo* tangles. But as the *khɔrɔ* is really a *munywalo* court, we cannot argue from the litigation we find in it to the general nature of the conflicts in the society. The error is somewhat like concluding from cases coming before special divorce courts among us, that marital disputes are the main causes of dissension in our society. *Khɔrɔ* proceedings are essentially *munywalo* proceedings because the complex *munywalo* system, and the safeguarding of its intricate reciprocities, can adequately be entrusted, not to private arrangements, but to an imposing public organization. The stresses and strains in the system are not only of a personal but of an institutional nature, involving the integration of diverse elements in the social structure. Compromises affect individuals as well as larger groups and their interrelations, and, for the solutions required, the society needs the wide perspective and wisdom of a trained body of men. They have to adjust personal difficulties, but in the context of an intricate system that is easily thrown out of gear. Herein also lies the special genius of the *khɔrɔ*.

Secondly, legal arrangements appear to be made and controlled by men, but that is because we identify law with the *khɔrɔ*, the place of the men. In *hu khumɛlwa* women are at least as important as men, and in family disputes no one occupies so pivotal a position as the cattle-linked sister, the legal 'builder' of most houses in the country, she who 'cuts' cases arising within the house and regulates the inheritance of goods and of widows. These 'judicial'-like activities cover vast provinces of the total culture, and they are fully recognized in *khɔrɔ* proceedings in which neither in arriving at a decision nor in safeguarding its execution can the men ignore the wishes, authority, or influence of the sister. In complicated cases, they often postpone their decision again and again until she

692 692 691 692 562 [See cat. 582+583.--Analyst]

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

692 562 appears, and they rely upon her to suggest a solution and to guarantee its being put into effect. Old women, sitting on the fringes of the court, are sometimes heard to mumble, as if impersonally, about the tortuous ways of the men when such-and-such is the simple solution; a man within earshot overhears the remark and applies it to the case; and more often than not, as you see the men 'jump upon' the happy phrase or formula suggested, you realize that men do not have the monopoly of wisdom. Women are the strongest pillars of the social structure and without their support there can be no guarantee that the adjustments in the superstructure will be lasting or effective; and, in a society that relies on compromise and not on coercion, this role becomes even more important. Women appear as plaintiffs or defendants as frequently as men; we have never heard either the *khɔrɔ* or a party object that an opponent was a woman unassisted by her guardian; but we have heard an old woman, the defendant, refuse to proceed in a case where the plaintiff was a young man of twenty-five years. It was a divorce case, in which the young man presumptuously had handed *munyɤalo* cattle, not to the mother of the bride, but to the bride's former husband. The mother took back her daughter and the young man sued for the return of his goods. The mother said in the *khɔrɔ*, 'I scorn to discuss the matter with you, a mere child. You know nothing about cases. Bring your father. I do not understand your complaint.' The *khɔrɔ* agreed. Of course, the *khɔrɔ* is the province of the men, and their place and function in it have been institutionalized; by contrast, only a few women have an institutional hold upon the *khɔrɔ*, but they are firmly entrenched in the social structure, which is the *raison d'être* of the *khɔrɔ*.

694 We cannot do more than give a general picture of a few aspects of the practice and procedure of the *khɔrɔ*. There are the usual preliminary processes. A creditor, going alone directly to the debtor, complains (*hu vela*) once, twice, perhaps many times; the complaint is not made through the village head. The debtor may ask his district head or another to intercede as his *mukhumedi*. But if nothing happens, the creditor warns the debtor that he will proceed to *hu ɖalia*, the formal complaint to the district head, not the village head, which begins the case. The dispute may still be settled privately with the district head appearing in the role of an intercessor rather than a judge, probably at the defendant's village. If this fails, the assistance of the 'mother' of the district may be called in, as already described, or there may be a full-dress *khɔrɔ* trial, with its 'opening' fees and 'fees of the feet'. Should the district head be 'overcome', the case may go to the capital. The parties are summoned to appear on a certain Sunday and there are present some fifty men, all of them potential arbitrators. It is difficult to distinguish judges, litigants, and visitors, and, though there is some one presiding, now one, now another of the men, even though they have been found guilty in a previous case the same day, may take the lead and decide the case.

695 The *khɔrɔ* is not unlike a family council: there are no set forms or formulas or procedures, no precise order in which cases are called or matters are discussed. While the parties to one case, unable to reach agreement, retire to the 'dung of the dogs' along the fence of the court-

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

strengthens the tendency towards cunning and duplicity (which safeguard the secrecy of the rain charms) and has given rise to the impression among Europeans that the Lovedu are cowardly and deceitful, lacking the manly qualities of their neighbours, the Shangana-Tonga. Foolish valour is discredited, for 'It is at the home of the coward that the porridge bowl is not thrown away': he lives to eat another day. The prestige of a queen as ruler also maintains the high status of women in a patrilineal society. Nowhere else are so many women heads of districts or in such important political positions. Women own cattle, have wives and may aspire to headship of large villages; and in the social system the main forces are oriented from the pivotal position of the cattle-linked sister. A wife or mother is queen of her establishment, as its old Khilovedu name, *mulago*, indicates: *hu laga* means to control like a leader, while *le lago* describes the excessive control of some overwatchful kraal heads.

Agriculture is not important as a field of achievement, for stores cannot be accumulated; immoderate success is suspect and a man cannot establish or alter his status by economic means. 'Yours is what you eat; what you set aside is another's', means both that expending energy upon accumulating goods is lack of balance and that the 'haves' cannot be ungenerous to the 'have-nots'. Nor is the royal complex of institutions, except in so far as it interpenetrates the social system, a field of achievement for ordinary men. It is the social system which, besides being one of the great pillars of security, provides the scheme in which man seeks self-expression and recognition. There are wide avenues of achievement for men, especially in the *khɔrɔ*, and women may aspire to influence within the *munywalo* complex and its 'houses'. There are other fields of achievement: men may find satisfaction in the circle of the huts of their wives, women in spirit possession, and both men and women may become doctors, district heads, craftsmen, or story-tellers, while the adventurous may seek expression in the fantasy of manipulating the forces of witchcraft.

But all these avenues are available only within the arrangements of the social structure, which on the whole are designed to eliminate competition and to reward co-operation. The activities of the *khɔrɔ*, in which men seek and display their highest self-expression, throw into bold relief the qualities and traits that are most esteemed in the society: mature wisdom, appeasement, reliance, not on force, but on agreement, and confidence in the effective operation of the long-run reciprocities of the social system. The task of the *khɔrɔ*, the most honourable and most arduous of all tasks, is successfully achieved only if the disputants can be guided towards reconciliation and acceptable compromises. Certainty—the idol of security set up by our aggressive society, the fetish worshipped by legalistic practitioners and the obsession impelling our courts to adjudicate upon conflicting rights according to strict law—is not a feature of the *khɔrɔ*. The *khɔrɔ* is oblivious of the fear that hard cases will make bad law, for it need not, as we do, steel itself against tenderness for the hardship of the unwitting offender, lest exceptions upset the certainty of the law and that elegant symmetry which, as we conceive, guarantees security. In

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

634 624 characteristic of Lowveld political organization. Districts are still of great importance, and the district head is a busy and important man, both socially and politically. Contact with the European has resulted in two diverse tendencies observable in our area: among small tribes, 634 624 178 such as Phalaborwa and Sekhopo's Lobedu, there has been increased centralization, the chief taking over functions, such as allocation of land, which used to be the province of headmen; elsewhere, especially in the large kingdom of Modjadji, district headmen are in many respects becoming more independent, exacting from underlings labour to which they are not entitled and even controlling other districts to which they have no right.

624 ●562 Women may here, as among Venda, be heads of districts,[1] and, though the proportion of women to men is never high, they are often the most important district heads in the tribe. Women become headmen in a variety of ways: among Lobedu a woman of the royal family may be appointed head of an area (generally, nowadays, over newly-bought tribal land) and though in practice her husband may do most of the work, she it is who is recognized and approached in the last resort. A daughter of the chief house succeeds her father even if there are sons of other houses; a woman may succeed her husband when the children are too young, and though, strictly speaking, she is only a regent in this case, she often continues to rule until her death and long after her son has attained his majority. Or a *rakhadi* may be asked to act as regent for her nephew, in which case she very often secures the succession for her own son, ousting the rightful heir.

695 LAW AND JUSTICE. The Lowveld was the land of the ordeal, the only method by which witchcraft could be discovered or difficult cases of theft and adultery, where evidence was inconclusive, be decided. Boiling medicated water which scalded only the hands of the guilty might be used or a concoction be drunk which intoxicated the culprit, leaving the innocent unaffected. Except for occasional use among the Phalaborwa, however, the ordeal has been completely ousted by the Shangana–Tonga smeller-out and a modern method of dealing with witchcraft has developed over the whole of the Lowveld, which has spread not only into Vendaland but also into portions of the

[1] Except among Phalaborwa, Tsubye, and the people of Tswale and Sekhopo.

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
FX14 Lovedu FX14

A sister's cattle-providing capacity gives her a pivotal position in the social structure. It is the cattle accruing from her marriage that 'build' a house for her brother and 'beget' children to her lineage. Over this house she has rights that can be legally and mystically enforced. She settles disputes in it, and distributes its possessions when its owner dies. She invokes the gods on its behalf; no one, not even her brother himself (the husband and head of the house), can ill treat the wife of this house without having to reckon with her, and any breach of the marriage relationship is void without her consent. It will be evident that no judgement of the Lovedu courts in regard to a marriage has much chance of being carried out without the assistance and co-operation of this sister. For this and other reasons women are prominent as intermediaries and conciliators in the society. It should also be no surprise that any woman may marry wives, whose children call her 'father'; that many women are kraal heads and some of them the most important districts heads in the country. As chief officiators in offerings and sacrifice women play an important role also in religion.

Structurally the agnatic group, of which the cattle-linked brother is a member, is a minor lineage three to four generations deep, which supplies wives to the lineage into which his sister has married. The obligations of providing wives on the one hand and returning cattle on the other cannot, indeed, be enforced beyond the actual houses concerned and their lineal descendants, but the relationships of reciprocity and the behaviour patterns of helpfulness on the part of the wife-receivers, and of honouring and periodically bringing beer on the part of the wife-providers, are usually extended beyond these houses to the whole minor lineage and, where the relationships have been long established and are kept alive as part of the political structure, they may embrace major lineages five to eight generations deep. The wife-providers are called either maternal uncles (*vamalume*), since a man's mother's brother (*malume*) is ideally his wife's father, or grandparents (*vamukhulu*), since his maternal grandfather is the male representative of his wife's agnatic group (being her paternal grandfather). Conversely, the wife-receivers are called either sons-in-law (*vatsɛni*), because the lineage into which a man's sister marries is also the lineage into which his daughter marries, or *vaḍuhulu* (grandchildren or sister's sons), a man's sister's son being the same person as his daughter's husband or his father's granddaughter. It should be noted that, even though these wife-providing and wife-receiving lineages are related through marriage, the relationships between them are not merely affinal. The wife-providers and wife-receivers are not merely brothers-in-law but also cognates—wife-providers being maternal uncles and grandparents, and wife-receivers being children of paternal aunts, sisters, or daughters. A man's maternal kin are also his affines, while the maternal kin and sororal affines are merged with the paternal kin.

This merging of various types of kin is perhaps the reason why all four lines of kin—father's father, father's mother, mother's father, mother's

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938, 1961-1962) 1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

642 631 634 644 562 643 557 588 units which, each under a headman, enjoy a considerable degree of autonomy.[1] A large proportion of these districts into which the country is divided are ruled by the descendants of original sections of the nuclear group; a few have been allocated to alien groups under their own headmen while some are held by royal women, *batanoni* or 'wives' of the queen. Many districts now held by commoners originated from *batanoni* but since women do not succeed one another as heads of districts these have been inherited by their sons of husbands given to them by the queen. Royal wives (*batanoni*) are of various kinds. Some are of royal blood, daughters of close relatives of the queen to whom they have been given as a token of homage (*ho loba*). Only these are set up by the queen as rulers over districts. (Women may also rule areas in their own right where there is no male heir, as we shall see). Other royal wives are 644 643 559 538 the daughters of district heads, while a number are daughters of foreign chiefs who come, sometimes with cattle, sometimes with money or a daughter to *loba* the queen for rain. Once a [582] woman from within the tribe has been accepted by the queen as a royal wife, the tie is renewed from generation to generation [834] on the pattern of cross-cousin marriage. Men may offer a daughter to the queen also in return for, or in the expectation of, economic help or political favour (though these are not always accepted) and there is a tendency today for districts to be subdivided into smaller and smaller units to satisfy the political aspirations of ambitious subjects. Royal wives bind to the queen not only her closest relatives but most of the important people in the tribe. Some wives are given away in marriage to her councillors, relatives and district headmen. [836] Some remain with her and have allocated lovers. Children of [602] these latter call the queen 'father' and she is responsible for helping them to marry.

563 613 The Lobedu proper appear originally to have regarded themselves as an aristocracy but today it is only the royal lineage (*ba Mohale*) and a number of important Lobedu district heads that are looked up to. Many non-Lobedu lineages have, by virtue of marriage links through royal wives, a higher status and are more closely related to the queen than sections of Lobedu themselves.

[1] For a general account of the Lobedu, see Krige, E. J. 1941, Krige, E. J. and J. D., 1945 and 1950, and Krige, J. D., 1939.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938, 1961-1962) 1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

Lobedu themselves. The society is remarkably egalitarian and there is no concentration of wealth in the hands of the ruling group. Nor would this be easy in a tribe in which the limited resources in property (in cattle) are used primarily for, and are constantly being converted into, marriage alliances.

Other distinctive features of the Lobedu are their marked agricultural bias; a fertility cult with sacred drums; masked dancing; ritual arrangements in ancestor worship (in the form of impersonation of the spirits, the predominance of beer offerings and the *phasa* rite of spurting water out of the mouth as an accompaniment to prayer) which link them more closely to the tribes to the north than to their southern Nguni and Sotho neighbours where the blood sacrifice and cattle cult are more clearly marked.

Agnatic Groupings

Despite the fact that they are ruled by a queen and that women can and do hold important political and religious positions the Lobedu are a patrilineal people in the sense that a man belongs to his father's lineage, property is inherited in the male line and marriage is patrilocal. The tribe is made up of a large number of different totemic groups, Lion, Elephant, Crocodile, Wild Pig, none of which, not even the royal Lobedu totem, is confined to the Lobedu tribe. All these totems are found in neighbouring tribes and many also in other parts of the Transvaal and elsewhere. A few groups have no totem (*motupo*) but designate themselves by their place of origin, e.g., *Mokhalaga*. Groups which have the same totem do not consider themselves related if they come from different places of origin. Elephant of Khalaga are thus unrelated to Elephant of Tsubye or Elephant of Thobolo. People sometimes swear by (*ana*) their totem and are supposed to but do not always abstain from eating it. The totemic name is useful only as a distinguishing mark; e.g., in divination the bones may indicate a person of the Elephant or Lion totem as responsible for illness or theft. Beyond this the *motupo* has little meaning and today many of the young people do not even use the term. The totemic group is not exogamous.

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term *moloko* or

EILEEN JENSEN KRIGE

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term mojako or
613 *lelako* which is in common use referring to the group of agnates
[602] as well as to the relatives on the mother's side of the family.
The lineage segment of four to five generations tracing its
[789] descent from a common male ancestor (grandfather of the
adult males) shares a common major shrine and occasionally
meets at the harvest thanksgiving or when a *mokhobo* (a gather-
ing of the descendants of a particular common ancestor) is
indicated by the diviner as the wish of a troublesome spirit.
[592] Such a group of agnates of four to five generations in depth
tends to be concentrated in the same locality and in many cases
may be found in the same homestead (*motse*). As neighbours
[496] and relatives they share in many common activities such as
helping in each other's work-parties, taking part in girls'
puberty ceremonies, consulting each other in the marriage of
their sons and daughters. Only in the minimal lineage of father
and sons are there jural ties. The lineage is not a land-owning
unit, has no political functions, is not exogamous, marriage
within the lineage being common especially in the Lobedu
royal group.

● [562] An interesting feature of the Lobedu lineage is the important
part played by its women who continue even after marriage
to be active in lineage affairs as leaders in religious ritual and as
[582] guardians over their brothers' households. The merging of the
[769] ancestors on the father's and mother's side of the family which
results from preferential marriage with the mother's uterine
brother's daughter and the inclusion in ancestor worship of
relatives on both sides, which will be described later, also affect
613 the character of the lineage. A religious gathering (*mokhobo*) of
769 the descendants of Sekhobo which I attended showed the
lineage segment of five generations in operation and illustrated
[602] some of these points. Descendants through both sons and
daughters in the line of Sekhobo's chief wife took part in the
ceremony and, in addition to calling upon the deceased father
and other male ascendants of the head of the lineage, the
officiator mentioned by name also the deceased father's uterine
sisters and the father's mother. The inclusion of the father's
mother was all the more remarkable because this was a gather-
ing of the descendants of Sekhobo and it had been the specific
complaint of the troubling ancestor that every year harvest
beer was being offered to the spirits on the father's mother's

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

I want a wife to come and stamp for me', said the queen. The girl was married by the queen and shortly after was given to the son of another 'wife' (*motanoni*) of the queen with whom she is now living at the Capital.

Sometimes the transaction takes on more of an economic character, a man pledging his daughter in order to receive economic help. Thus Jim's father in a period of starvation took his ten-year-old daughter to a man at Malemacha and said, 'I am starving and poor. Give me money. I have a girl, a *ledolo*'. Money was given to him and later when the girl was sent in marriage, cattle were handed over in the usual way. More commonly this technique was used when a man had no sister whose cattle he might use to marry with. He then went to a maternal or affinal relative or to a friend or even a stranger who had cattle, saying: '*Ge no khuru*—I have a knee', in reference to his procreative powers, thus pledging himself to send an as yet unborn daughter in marriage. Today such transactions have become infrequent since money can so easily be obtained by migrant labour or a loan can be repaid in money without having to pledge a daughter.

The cattle or other property (marriage hoes were used in the old days)[1] establish tangible obligations between the two families which can be upheld at law even though the contract is fulfilled only in the next generation or later. Moreover the bond is permanent: other marriages will follow the first from generation to generation in a manner that will be described below. The use of women in property transactions of this kind which is not considered to be derogatory by the Lobedu is all the more remarkable in the light of the very high position of, and the power wielded by, women in Lobedu social life.

Some Aspects of Marriage

It will be necessary before discussing the domestic cycle to examine briefly the nature of Lobedu marriage; for not only does marriage establish strong economic and social relation-

[1] These hoes were too large and heavy for tilling the soil and were merely kept in a hut. The chief councillor of the queen, a man of about eighty years old, still remembers the use of marriage hoes in a few cases in his boyhood. Six hoes or eight head of cattle passed in marriage at that time.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938, 1961-1962) 1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

provide a bride, whether for a brother or other relative or even a stranger, has a moral right to a daughter-in-law from the 'house' established by her cattle. Even though it was her husband who provided the cattle and it is usually he who is said to be 'following the tracks of his cattle' when such a girl is obtained for his son, the wife's right to the services of the girl are such that even if the husband himself, instead of the son, were to marry this girl (which quite often is the case, i.e., wife's brother's daughter marriage) this bride would be attached to her house and would cook for her as though she were the mother-in-law.

So strong is a woman's moral right to her cattle-linked brother's daughter to come and cook for her in her old age that even if she has no son she can, especially if her husband is dead, 'marry' the girl herself, using a daughter's bride-price. The Lobedu themselves phrase it as marriage of a woman to a woman. In reality it is in this case the marriage of a girl to a fictitious son of the woman who is said to be marrying her. Such a bride is called *seji* (daughter-in-law) by the woman, who is 'grandmother', to any children born to the girl. The children take the surname of the husband of the woman just as though her son had married the girl. A woman who practises as a doctor and earns money can marry a girl with her own cattle. Here too the children (whether by an allocated man or born 'in the bush') take the lineage name of the husband of the woman who 'married' their mother. They are of his lineage but belong essentially to the 'house' (*motse*) of the woman who married their mother.

A woman may also 'marry' a girl on behalf of her own lineage —for a deceased or non-existent brother. This is done where an heir is needed or where a brother has died before marrying the girl who was 'born for' or engaged to him as in the case of Thepize in Figure 1.

It is the source of the cattle that pass which determines the lineage to which the children belong in woman-marriage. Should the cattle come from the 'house' of a married woman the children belong to the husband's lineage; if they come from the family of procreation of the woman the children take her father's surname. The queen and women who rule districts on behalf of a deceased or non-existent brother are called 'husband'

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938, 1961-1962) 1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

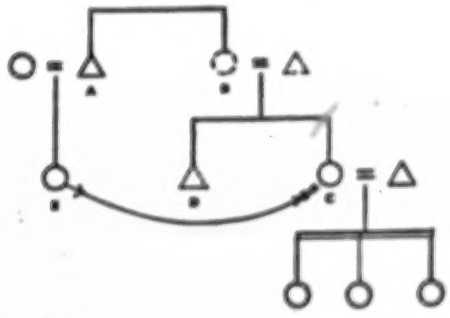

FIG. 1. Case illustrating 'marriage' of a woman to a woman. Thepize's father (A) was the cattle-linked, uterine brother of (B) the mother of Mandike (C), a married woman with children. Mandike's brother (D), whose parents were dead, had been engaged to Thepize (E), his mother's brother's daughter, and cattle had already passed when he, too, died. So Thepize's father (A) took his daughter (E) to Mandike (C), and said: 'Take Thepize and "stay" with her'. So, as it was phrased, Mandike 'married' Thepize (*o nu hekile*), who came to live in Mandike's husband's village. Mandike (C) called Thepize (E) not '*sagi*' (daughter-in-law) but '*nukadilo*' (sister-in-law); E's children called C '*rakkadi*' (father's sister) and took her father's surname.

(*nuwa wa ka*) by their '*wives*' *batsumi* when they marry on behalf of their own lineage and *papa* (father) by the children of these wives, just as though they were men. In ritual matters, however, they act as women.

Preferential marriage with the mother's brother's daughter appears in the Lobedu context almost to follow from relationships established by the cattle that pass and the rights of the sister to a daughter-in-law from whoever has used her marriage cattle. Yet it is not always from the identical 'house' that was established by the cattle that a daughter is sent in marriage, nor necessarily by the same brother as used the cattle. Maseriba's bride-price was used by her brother Andrew. Thirty years later (1961) when she went to ask for a girl to 'come and stamp for her' (she is a widow and has no sons) it was the daughter of Batamedi, her other uterine brother, that was offered. When

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

592 that the man has now a son-in-law, whom he can approach for
571 economic help whenever he is in need. His wife, too, if she
606 needs anything can brew beer to take as *khirola* for her son-in-law, or crack open *morula* nuts and take them as a gift, in return for which he will give her money or whatever he can. *Khirola* may be taken even to the uterine brother of a son-in-law for
[607] he also is a *mudukulu*. A man looks more and more to his affines for economic help as his father ages and his brothers become involved in their own commitments. To the wife the marriage of her daughter is also very important for a different reason. This makes it possible for her to have a daughter-in-law. For on the marriage of her son a woman stops cooking and in addition has the help of her daughter-in-law in her garden work. If she has no son she can in the last resort always use the bride-price to 'marry' a girl herself who will relieve her of the most heavy and onerous household and agricultural work.

592 With the marriage of his sons there is a gradual handing
571 over of the reins to the younger generation which is completed by the man's death, when the eldest son of his chief wife takes over his position and responsibilities. This is the point at which the house achieves its final independence economically (though not ritually).

613 It is interesting to note that Lobedu do not, like the Zulu,
562 identify a lineage segment by its female foundress.

Death and Inheritance

748 On the death of a wife her husband must administer the affairs
593 of her 'house' to its best advantage. If the children have any
[609] complaints they may, if their grandparents are dead, make them to the father's cattle-linked sister or to his eldest uterine sister who has considerable influence as 'priestess' of the family.
[613] If the father marries a woman with the cattle of the daughter of such a 'house' such wife will be attached to this house and the sons of the house could use the marriage cattle of the daughters of this woman to obtain wives.

748 When a married woman dies leaving very young children they are generally sent either to the mother's mother or to her sister to be reared. M's son and son's wife died in close succession leaving very young children. Shortly after, when his own

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

given to the son of deceased's youngest wife who had deserted him; two goats were killed for the widow of the deceased's eldest son by his first wife when she came from Johannesburg to pay a visit of condolence. Deceased's field was a *leshupe*, a site of their previous village, and as is the custom with such a field, was divided between his wives. His mealies were equally divided between all his wives, his own daughters who were present at the ceremony also receiving some. In the case of Mathekha, all his cattle were given by the *khadi* (his sister) to his eldest son by his chief wife, a man who was a prominent councillor of the queen. It was understood they would be used for helping his brothers and half-brothers to marry. The old man's blankets and money were divided among all his children, the elder ones receiving £1 10s. 0d., the smaller ones only 10s.

The wives of a deceased man if they are still of childbearing age are allocated to his brothers or, in the case of a very young wife, sometimes to the chief son and heir. It is his responsibility to hold the family together after the death of his father. The division of the property is made on the day of purification from mourning (*khitshila*) about a year after the death when all the relatives have gathered together. The person responsible for the division of the inheritance in property and wives is the eldest uterine sister of the deceased who acts in consultation with her sisters, especially the cattle-linked sister of the deceased. If there is no uterine sister the deceased's eldest daughter takes her place. She will act in consultation with her father's brother if one is still alive. In allocating wives some consideration is generally given to the wishes of the parties concerned.

When the heir is a minor, a brother of the deceased, usually the one who inherits the mother of the heir, may be chosen to act as regent. But he must be careful to act only in consultation with the *khadi*. In many instances in the case of the death of a district head when the *khadi* (sister of deceased) is old or a widow and free to leave her husband's homestead she may herself come to rule in her brother's village. When M. died, the son of his chief wife was still a child so his uterine sister, a widow, came to rule, while the younger half-brother of the deceased returned from another area where he had been living to set up his village near by in order to raise seed to his half-brother by the chief wife and help his half-sister by conducting

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938, 1961-1962) 1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

the court cases. Later, when the heir came of age, a new homestead was built. When Mabulana died in the 1940's his daughter, a married woman who does not live in the area was made official district head. Her mother's brother came specially from the Capital to live in the area and help her by conducting cases.

The mother's brother is considered to be eminently suitable as adviser to a ruler. The queen, too, traditionally has a mother's brother as chief councillor. A mother's brother has no claim to succession yet is deeply interested in the welfare of his sister's child. He will see to it that the sister's child gets his rights. The position of the son of the *khadi* who is acting as regent is somewhat different. There is a Lobedu proverb saying '*Bya thoge monye bo dula mudukulu*—where a master is lacking there sits the nephew'. And it is true that the son of a woman regent is often ruler in all but name. In the 1930's there were two blatant cases in which the rightful heirs of district heads who had long reached man's estate seemed in danger of permanently being ousted. In both cases in the long run when the *khadi* died the rightful heir was installed, in one of the cases on the expressed dying wish of the *khadi*. Right seems to prevail in the long run.

The Homestead Through Time

Basically a homestead consists of a group of 'houses' belonging to the wives of the head or of the head and his half-brothers. Other relatives may attach themselves to it but the core remains the group of agnates.

Many of the smaller homesteads that have all the appearance of being independent are found upon investigation to be portions (a 'house') of a neighbouring homestead, which has become separated in space but still considers itself part and acknowledges the authority and control of the senior homestead near by. The most obvious case of this arises where, owing to quarrels between co-wives, a husband has placed one of the wives in a homestead of her own and visits her there. If a wife has a married son then in the event of serious quarrels there is more likely to be a hiving off, the son moving to a different area with his mother and siblings.

In Figure 5 a very small homestead is shown. Here the

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938, 1961-1962) 1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

one hand a means of binding the women of the lineage, even after their marriage, by strong links to their father's family and on the other of maintaining from generation to generation the bonds with the maternal kin created by the marriage of the parents.

A woman has a dual role in the social structure. On the one hand by establishing a 'house' in her husband's lineage, she is the means whereby his lineage is perpetuated and its numbers increased; for even after the death of her husband his brothers will raise seed to his name and in the absence of sons she can herself ensure the continuation of her husband's lineage by marrying a woman on behalf of a fictitious son. On the other hand a woman remains important to her own lineage: if she is the eldest child of her 'house' she will officiate at all important religious offerings (if her brother is older he may officiate but she will always be called to collaborate with him); when she dies her name and those of her sisters will be included among the names of ancestors called upon in prayer; she divides out the inheritance on the death of her uterine brother; she guards the interests of the children of her cattle-linked brother's 'house' whence she will obtain a daughter-in-law; upon her falls the responsibility in the absence of her parents of providing an heir in her mother's 'house' (of her father's lineage) should there be no son; and she may even act in the place of her deceased father as ruler over a district until the heir is of age or until one can be raised.

The maintenance of links with married sisters and its complement marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter, by means of which one's links with one's wife's (or mother's) family are perpetuated, are supreme values in Lobedu society. That is why a wife who has no son has little difficulty in persuading her husband to hand over her daughter's bride-price to her brother rather than create links with a strange family. It is possible thereby to 'build a house' (or 'make a gate') at her brother's home from which her daughter's son will obtain a wife. This may at first sight appear to be very like the transfer of rights from mother to daughter but this is not the case. It is made possible by the transfer of cattle belonging to the daughter's husband and is bound up with the great desire to maintain links between the descendants of brother and sister. The right